

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1. (Original) A hard disk unit that performs reading and writing data in response to an access from a host equipment, the hard disk unit comprising:

an encoder that generates a specific bit string as an encoding key by performing a predetermined arithmetic operation using at least one of identification information relating to the host equipment and identification information relating to a controller device of the host equipment, and encodes data that is to be written with the encoding key; and

a recording unit that records the data encoded by the encoder.

Claim 2. (Original) The hard disk unit according to claim 1, wherein the encoder flips bits in each of a data unit to be written, the bits having predetermined correspondence with content of the encoding key.

Claim 3. (Original) The hard disk unit according to claim 1, wherein the encoder generates the encoding key by performing a predetermined arithmetic operation using at least one of the identification information relating to the host equipment and the identification information relating to the controller device of the host equipment, and at least one of identification information relating to the hard disk unit and predetermined identification information relating to a user.

Claim 4. (Original) The hard disk unit according to claim 1, wherein the encoder halts to encode the data in a case where a predetermined cancellation code is input.

Claim 5. (Currently amended) The hard disk unit according to claim 2, further comprising a decoder that decodes the encoded data recorded in the recording unit by flipping bits in each ~~of the~~ data unit, the bits having the predetermined correspondence with content of the encoding key.

Claim 6. (Currently amended) An information processing method using a hard disk unit that performs reading and writing data in response to an access from a host equipment, the method comprising:

generating, in said hard disk unit, a specific bit string as an encoding key by performing a predetermined arithmetic operation using at least one of identification information relating to the host equipment and identification information relating to a controller device of the host equipment;

encoding, in said hard disk unit, data that is to be written with the encoding key; and recording, in said hard disk unit, the encoded data.

Claim 7. (Original) The information processing method according to claim 6, wherein the encoding of the data is performed by flipping bits in each of a data unit to be written, the bits having predetermined correspondence with content of the encoding key.

Claim 8. (Original) The information processing method according to claim 6, wherein the generating of the encoding key is performed by a predetermined arithmetic operation using at least one of the identification information relating to the host equipment and the identification information relating to the controller device of the host equipment, and at least

one of identification information relating to the hard disk unit and predetermined identification information relating to a user.

Claim 9. (Original) The information processing method according to claim 6, wherein the encoding of the data is halted in a case where a predetermined cancellation code is input.

Claim 10. (Original) The information processing method according to claim 7, further comprising decoding the encoded data by flipping bits in each of the data unit, the bits having the predetermined correspondence with content of the encoding key.

Claim 11. (Currently amended) A signal bearing medium containing a sequence of instructions for a program executable by a digital data processing unit for An information processing program for controlling a computer to perform reading and writing data on and from a hard disk unit in response to an access from a host equipment, the program comprising:

instructions for generating, in said hard disk unit, a specific bit string as an encoding key by performing a predetermined arithmetic operation using at least one of identification information relating to the host equipment and identification information relating to a controller device of the host equipment;

instructions for encoding, in said hard disk unit, data that is to be written with the encoding key; and

instructions for recording, in said hard disk unit, the encoded data.

Claim 12. (Currently amended) The medium of information processing program according to claim 11, wherein the encoding of the data is performed by flipping bits in each of a data unit to be written, the bits having predetermined correspondence with content of the encoding key.

Claim 13. (Currently amended) The medium of information processing program according to claim 11, wherein the instructions for generating of the encoding key comprises instructions for performing is performed by a predetermined arithmetic operation using at least one of the identification information relating to the host equipment and the identification information relating to the controller device of the host equipment, and at least one of identification information relating to the hard disk unit and predetermined identification information relating to a user.

Claim 14. (Currently amended) The medium of information processing program according to claim 11, wherein the instructions for encoding of the data comprise instructions for halting is halted in a case where a predetermined cancellation code is input.

Claim 15. (Currently amended) The medium of information processing program according to claim 12, further comprising instructions for decoding the encoded data by flipping bits in each of the data unit, the bits having the predetermined correspondence with content of the encoding key.

Claim 16. (New) The hard disk unit of claim 1, wherein said hard disk unit comprises an

external hard drive.

Claim 17. (New) The hard disk unit of claim 1, further comprising a disassembling and assembling unit that disassembles and assembles data in accordance with the size of data to be written from the host equipment to a hard disk, a sector size, and a cluster size.

Claim 18. (New) The hard disk unit of claim 1, further comprising a housing that houses said encoder and said recording unit.

Claim 19. (New) The hard disk unit of claim 18, wherein said housing of said hard disk unit is external to a housing of said host equipment.

Claim 20. (New) The hard disk unit of claim 1, wherein said encoder generates said encoding key based upon one of a serial number of a controller for the host equipment and a serial number of the hard disk unit.